

River Scene



A Newsletter for City of San Marcos Employees



January/February 2012

MAKING DREAMS REALITY

By Trey Hatt, Communications Specialist

Many dedicated volunteers will be helping City departments ask residents how the City of San Marcos can help make their dreams reality at a series of open house meetings in January and February.

The meetings are part of the City's level of service review. City staff will ask residents how much service they want in the areas of parks and recreation, police and fire protection, library services, street infrastructure and future water supply.



PRACTICE: Tina Moreno and Cindy Conyers fill out a survey after the Level of Service trial run.

Each department will illustrate the "Corolla," "Camry" or "Lexus" level of service for their area and outline the costs associated with each level.

At the conclusion of each session, attendees will enter their zip code, home value or monthly rent into a computer survey and hypothetical property tax increases or decreases will be shown based on the "Corolla," "Camry" or "Lexus" level of service they choose.

The community meetings are a prelude to the fiscal year 2012-13 budgeting

process and allow residents to see the City's current service level and to communicate what their dreams are for these six key areas. Information received from residents will be used in planning the City's budget and establishing long term programming goals.

Refreshments will be served at each community meeting, and residents are encouraged to attend one of the eight sessions to participate in making dreams a reality in San Marcos.

Thanks to our volunteers and those who will be "on the clock" to help facilitate these conversations!

Volunteers

Lisa Dvorak
Audry Guerra
Jennifer Ornelas
Abigail Gillfillan
Teresa Alvelo

Jaclyn Gonzales
Rudy Ramirez
Janae Ryan
Carol Jo Cooley
Karlie Beach
Renate Yanity

Sam Aguirre
Christine
Barton-Holmes
Linda Huff
Margaret Salinas

IT's volunteers:

Ramona Brown
Isaac Badu
Denise Molina

Kerry Cortez
Ryan Parks
George Applegate
Stacy Malone

Schedule of Meetings:

Jan. 19: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sector 4
Cuahtémoc Hall, 1100 Patton Street

Jan. 24: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sectors 5 & 6
Goodnight Middle School Cafeteria,
1301 Hwy 123

Jan. 26 State of the City: 5:30-7 p.m.
Embassy Suites/City Conference Center

Jan. 30: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sectors 1 & 8
Dunbar Center, 801 MLK Drive

Feb. 2: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sector 9
Activity Center, 501 E Hopkins Street

Feb. 6: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Sector 2
First Lutheran Church, 130 W Holland Street

Feb. 9: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sector 7
Travis Elementary Cafeteria, 1437 Post Road

Feb. 13: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Sector 3
First Lutheran Church 130 W Holland Street

Enhancing Performance Evaluations & Merit Pay Program

By Ron Campos,
Director of Human Resources

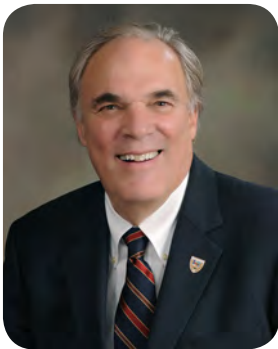
Beginning in 2012, the City will enhance the current employee performance evaluation process by having two separate processes. One will determine how an employee is awarded with merit pay and another process is designed to give employees feedback on job performance.

The typical Annual Performance Evaluation process will continue in 2012 and be used as a tool for discussion between supervisors

Community Wellness and Strengthening the Middle Class

By Jim Nuse, City Manager

In the last several issues of River Scene, I have written about four of the City Council's Strategic Initiatives that have set the direction for the City of San Marcos: Strong Finances, Customer Friendly Processes, Big Picture Infrastructure and Maintaining and Protecting the San Marcos River.



The fifth and last goal is Community Wellness and Strengthening the Middle Class. In adopting this goal last year, the City Council focused on the importance Employees Reach Out to Aid Their Fellows of local creativity, historic preservation, livable wage jobs, and overall health and wellness for our citizens.

Our City staff is tackling this big issue in a variety of ways. Our planners have been examining the demographics of San Marcos after the 2010 Census and other population studies to better understand our unique community. We are working to encourage strong neighborhoods through the Police Department's "Achieving Community Together" program, establishing a Neighborhood Commission, home improvement incentives, and major neighborhood infrastructure projects. The update of the City's Comprehensive

Plan over the next year, with significant community participation, will have a great impact on how we define our future neighborhoods, growth and redevelopment.

We are focusing on job creation through our investments in economic development and our partnership with Texas State University STAR Park for the Center for Research and Commercialization now under construction on Hunter Road. We are working with our local education partners—the public schools, university, job corps and community college—to collaborate on mutual goals in support of a better educated workforce.

In the area of Community Wellness, our Community Services Department devotes enormous effort in offering a wide variety of programs promoting health and wellness. They are implementing many of the recommendations from the City Council's Healthy Communities Task Force for a fitness expo in 2012, special activities promoting healthy lifestyles, and promoting community health in publications and online. Our spectacular parks system also provides wonderful opportunities for our citizens to run, walk, skate, play-- and dream.

In 2012, we will continue dedicating our efforts to fulfill the vision provided by our citizens and the City Council for our community. Each of our City employees is an important contributor to this process, and I want to express my gratitude for your dedicated work.

WE'VE GOT LETTERS!

KUDOS to the City Staff

(To Lisa Morris)

Hello Ms. Morris,

I wanted to tell you how much my son enjoyed meeting "the real Santa" at the Sights and Sounds celebration. There is no way to convey to you how important this interaction was to him. We had encountered a grouchy Santa at a Christmas party and then an even grumpier one at the mall. Needless to say, my son was fast losing his fascination with Santa and I told him that those men were just "helpers" and not the real Santa. After meeting the gentleman you had at the carnival last year, he exclaimed, "Mom! That was the real Santa!" Thank you for restoring my son's belief in Santa. The picture of him hugging Mr. C graced our Christmas cards last year and is hanging on our tree as we speak.

It goes without saying that I believe this celebration to be the best Christ-

mas gig in Texas and I am really proud to say that because although I moved away as a young child, I was born in San Marcos, Texas! All of your hard work is very much worth it. We will be taking in the Sights and Sounds this Saturday and hope to for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Shelly Fisher

(Following the Chili Fundraiser for the Malone and Buerschinger families)

I've always been very proud to call myself a COSM employee, but I think never more so than today. To everyone involved in today's fundraiser - great job!

Chase Stapp
Assistant Chief of Police,
Operations Division

Thank You

I want to thank my fellow City employees and spouses for the huge outpouring of love, prayers, assistance and donations of all types during November following the unexpected death of my beloved husband, Joe Green. I can never repay the kindness you have each shown me. We want you to know how very much it means to me and my son Davis. Thank you, and may 2012 bring each of you blessings tenfold.

-Jana E. Green

OUR WRITERS

River Scene is a bi-monthly newsletter published by the City of San Marcos for our employees. Editorial Board Members are: Melissa Millecam, Editor, Trey Hatt, Asst. Editor, Cindy Conyers, Stefanie Daily, Kyle Dicke, Bobette Elliott, Andrew Freeman, Katherine Glaze, Jana Green, Janis Hendrix, Joni Jones, Denise Molina, Melissa Mulhollan, Stephanie Reyes, Jo Secrest, Karen Smith, Linda Spacek, Tammy Strakos, Kristy Stark, Renate Yanity and Warren Zerr. Contributors: Jim Nuse and Don Anders. Copyright: January-February 2012.

Employees Reach Out to Aid Their Co-Workers

By Trey Hatt,
Communications
Specialist

City employees rallied behind two of their own in 2011 when their children were diagnosed with cancer.

Stacy Malone's three-year-old son Waylon was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma cancer. Tom Buerschinger's 15-year-old son Wray is being treated for Burkitt's lymphoma. Both are undergoing chemotherapy for these serious diseases.



San Marcos Fire Chief Les Stephens, left and Captain Howie Minor, right, deliver bicycles to Waylon and Morgan Malone for Christmas

Employees raised more than \$4,000 at a chili lunch and bake sale for the two families. The proceeds were divided between the two to help pay for expenses incurred during treatment. The employee Weight Watchers group is also planning a 5k run to benefit the two families.

But the good deeds didn't end at donations or with San Marcos city employees. San Marcos firefighters planned in mid-December to deliver Christmas gifts and donations from the San Marcos Professional Firefighters Association and Pink Heals to the Malone Family. Waylon was more excited to see real-life firefighters than anything else—but the firefighters making the delivery were in plain clothes and not dressed for the part.

One call to the New Braunfels Fire Department later, a shiny red fire truck with bunker gear-clad firefighters arrived bringing Christmas cheer to Waylon and his twin sister Morgan.

The Association and Pink Heals each contributed \$500 to the Malone family and to the Buerschinger family for Christmas gifts and dinner.

Malone said she and her husband are thankful for everyone's overwhelming generosity. "I am very blessed to work with such amazing people who I can truly say are my friends," she said.

Every family deals with hardship differently and has unique needs during times of stress. Employees who are going through a personal or family emergency can let their supervisor or director know what they need—whether it's as simple as a kind gesture for the children and some privacy, or monetary donations to offset financial hardship during a crisis.

We Care

By Renate Yanity,
Contracts Manager

Some of us have been here forever --- we have experienced many changes and continue to watch as our co-workers turned friends come and go. One thing that has remained constant, however, is our closeness; that sense of being part of something bigger. It's one reason we stay as long as we do.

Knowing what was happening in the lives of our co-workers throughout the City organization was much easier when we were smaller -- yes, when I came we hadn't even hit the 200 employee mark. Now, with 500-plus employees, we aren't connected in the same way we once were.

Recently we have pulled together to provide help and respite for some of our co-workers whose children are facing illness. It isn't the first time we have worked together as a team and it won't be the last. So, in order to make it easier for members of our City family to find support and relief, some of us would like to start a support network for employees facing difficult times.

"We Care" is just a glimmer of an idea right now, but we envision the creation of a lifeline for employees needing support to get resources, information and assistance as they face difficult times. Ideas include the creation of a website link for access to information, the provision of a reference listing of available local and national resources and the creation of a plan/process for organized fundraising.

If you are interested in joining together with other employees in this effort, please contact Renate Yanity (ext. 8156) or Denise Molina (ext. 8119). More information will follow as we work together to develop this support system further.

WELCOME! *New Employees*



MICHAEL CARDWELL
Engineering Inspector
Engineering and CIP

Hello, I'm Michael Cardwell. I moved down from Arlington, Texas after working for the City of Fort Worth for 23 years in the Engineering Department. I have been married for 18 years to my lovely wife, Debbie. We have three boys and a granddaughter. I enjoy traveling, watching sports, and playing golf.



KERRY CORTEZ
Information Technology
Support Technician
Information Technology Department

Hello, my name is Kerry Cortez, and I am the new IT Technician for the City of San Marcos IT Department. I'm originally from a town in South Texas called Edinburg. I had done a small internship with the City back in 2008 and had jumped at the opportunity to work with the City once more. I like to cook, read, swim in the river, and have a great time out in the town when I have the chance and the right company.



JOSEPH FLINK
Lineperson Helper
Public Services-
Electric Utilities

My wife, Annie, and I have lived in San Marcos for 10 years. I was recently hired as a Line Person Helper with the Electric Utilities. Coming from the field of Arboriculture, Electric Utilities is a new trade for me. I am excited to be working for the City and not commuting to Austin anymore. Annie and I had our first son in May.



ALISON BRAKE
Planner
Development Services-
Planning

I was born and raised in El Paso and moved to San Marcos to attend what was then Southwest Texas State University. I've been here ever since! I got both my bachelors and masters degrees at Texas State and have worked previously for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality as well as for the City of New Braunfels Planning Department. I am working here in Development Services as a Planner. I've

been married for 3 years; my husband is a Geography teacher at New Braunfels High School. I like to read, love on my blue heeler pup, Bailey, travel, and scuba dive!



LAINA BURGET
Animal Shelter Technician
Community Services-
Environmental Health

Hi, my name is Laina. I work for animal control. I am a kennel tech, student and mother. I am an animal lover and have two labs at home. My son is twelve; we both enjoy hunting, fishing and camping. I look forward to working here for the city.



DANIEL CERDA
Animal Control Officer
Community Services-
Environmental Health

Hi, my name is Daniel Cerda. I moved to San Marcos about a year ago and finally was able to get a job with the City as an Animal Control Officer. I am enjoying my new job. Happy New Year to everyone!!



JEFF CALDWELL
Park Ranger Program
Manager
Park Rangers

I will be working in the Marshal's office as the Park Ranger Manager. I have lived in or near San Marcos since 1988. I worked for the San Marcos Police Department for approximately 17 years. I am married and have two kids.



JOSEPH CAMPBELL
Parking Technician
Police Department

Hello everybody, my name is Joseph Campbell, and I am from Austin, Texas! I recently moved to San Marcos in August because I will be attending Texas State University in the spring. There I will be majoring in geography. I was recently hired to be a parking technician with the SMPD, and so far, I am having a blast working there. All the people there are very friendly and helpful. In my free time I like to spend time with my girlfriend, Kori, play guitar, and play basketball. And every so often, I enjoy a good book to read. Thanks for reading my bio, and I'll see you around San Marcos!



KAYLA JONES
Lifeguard
Community Services-
Parks & Recreation

Well, howdy! I'm a pre-nursing major at Texas State and plan to use my nursing degree to do missions where ever the Lord leads me. I love knitting, riding my bike, longboarding or anything else outside. I've worked as a caterer, in an ice cream shop and as a lifeguard. I want my life to reflect how good Jesus is in all circumstances.



KASSIE SHANAFELT
Library Page
Community Services-Library

I am twenty years old from Valley Mills, Texas. I will be working at the public library as a library page. I am a student at Texas State majoring in Communication Disorders.



JOHN STANLEY
Planner
Development Services-
Planning

I recently finished my Masters in Planning at UT and joined the Development Services Department as a Planner in November. I grew up in Austin and live with my wife Megan. I love to watch and play sports as well as travel and hunt. I am excited to be working for the City and look forward to getting to know everyone!



MELISSA TORRES-WHITMER
Emergency Communications
Operator
Police Department

Hey there! I'm Melissa and I will be your new Emergency Communications Officer. I am joining a super group of people and feel very blessed to be a part of this family. I am married with three boys. When not at work or busy with my family, I enjoy reading (so I haven't read in awhile!), spending time with those active boys of mine, and watching reality shows like the Amazing Race and Survivor. Thanks for making me a part of the family! Again, I feel very blessed to be here.

City Mourns Passing of Gabi Zuniga



San Marcos City employees are mourning the loss of Maria Gabriela (Gabi) Zuniga, Emergency Communications Operator, who passed away unexpectedly on December 2, 2011 at the age of 31.

Gabi worked as a 911 operator in San Marcos for more than a year and before that served in El Paso and Travis County. Recently

she completed the first Citizens Fire Academy with San Marcos Fire Department, participating in all of its challenging activities with the Inaugural Class.

She was a 1998 graduate of San Marcos High School, where she was president of Business Professionals of America and active as a Thespian, the National Honor Society, San Marcos Rattler Band and charter member of the Mariachi Band. She attended both Texas State University and Austin Community College.

From ages 5 to 20, Gabi danced in festivals with Ballet Folkloric and performed with Oxotochtli at Texas State. She was described as a "Jill of all Trades," enjoying playing the violin, singing, cooking and dancing.

Gabi is survived by her fiancé, Tony Carbaugh, her parents Guadalupe and Margaret Romero Zuniga, and her sister, Dr. Adriana Zuniga Paguio and husband Dr. Emmanuel Paguio of Chicago. She was buried at Memory Lawn Memorial Park in Martindale.

We offer our sincere condolences to Gabi's family and our colleagues at SMPD for the loss of a remarkable and wonderful young woman and friend.



Gabi rappels down the side of Fire Station 5 during Citizens Fire Academy this fall.

Clerk's Staff Wins 5 Stars!

By Trey Hatt, Communications Specialist

The Department of State Health Services recently awarded the City Clerk's Office its Five Star Exemplary Award for the fourth year in a row for its handling of vital records such as birth and death certificates.

The Five-Star Exemplary Award is the highest award given by the DSHS. Several criteria must be met to earn the award: timeliness, improvement, training, timely electronic birth registration, and managing registration.

Many of these important functions are managed electronically and entered into state databases. The dedicated staff at the City Clerk's office exceeded state requirements for timeliness and accuracy in handling vital records.

Mayor Daniel Guerrero recognized the honor during the proclamations segment of the Jan. 3 City Council meeting. During his remarks, the Mayor noted that "Customer Friendly Processes" is one of the Council's

five strategic initiatives, and the City Clerk staff's recognition by the State shows their dedication to this goal.



Mayor Daniel Guerrero honors the City Clerk's office staff for earning the Five Star Exemplary Award from the Department of State Health Services. Accepting the honors are, front, Tammy Cook, Jamie Lee Pettijohn, Margaret Salinas and Elizabeth Trevino. Back row are City Council Members Wayne Becak, John Thomaidis, Jude Prather and Shane Scott. Not pictured is Daley Heller, who was helping a customer when the photo was taken (Photo by Don Anders).

City Family Celebrates Holidays

By Trey Hatt, Communications Specialist

City employees celebrated the season in style with Christmas parties for the grown-ups and for the kids.

The San Marcos Activity Center hosted a children's Christmas party Dec. 4 for employees' kids. Santa Claus showed up for photo ops with the youngsters and to take down their wish lists.

On Dec. 10, the grownups had their turn at the Activity Center during the employee Christmas party. There were door prizes, a catered dinner and a cash bar; dancing, Xbox competitions and karaoke rounded out the fun.

We're glad that everyone had a safe and happy holiday season!



San Marcos Reaches Out to the Community during the Holidays

By Jo Secrest

City employees and community groups join forces every year to make the Holidays a little more cheerful.

The Scheib Special Opportunity Center was invited to perform before City Council, and on Dec. 6, City Council members were presented with a delightful performance of Christmas Carols.

City employees also get in the act.

For the last 34 years, in October and November, the SMPD Blue Santa Program has gone into full swing to provide



BLUE SANTA brings joy and a stuffed toy—to Noah Nunez, age 4.

presents to less fortunate children. The program, which started with a few volunteers, has now grown into a major holiday drive that puts smiles on the faces of San Marcos children.

City employees along with the Southside Community Center, the Food Bank, the San Marcos Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association and Texas State sororities and service clubs all join together to assist the Blue Santa Program. These volunteers solicit donations of cash, toys, wrapping paper, and time to ensure that children who are less fortunate will have a present on Christmas.

Each child enrolled in the program receives at least two gifts, and an additional gift is added if available.

This year Blue Santa touched the lives of 365 families and 1,161 children, not counting the walk-in families who come on the distribution day and didn't get a chance to fill out applications before the deadline. Blue Santa also helps families that volunteers find out about at the last minute.

This year a family from San Antonio whose home was burglarized lost everything, including the presents underneath the tree. They could not find an organization in San Antonio



OFFICER TUCKER helps make a special Christmas for Adelaida Nunez and children Jose, age 9, Jacob, 4, and Noah, 5.



HUNDREDS OF FAMILIES line up for Blue Santa's distribution of Christmas gifts.



SANTA'S ELVES hold a special place in the hearts of hundreds of San Marcos children.

to help them, so Blue Santa made sure that the children had gifts for Christmas morning.

To volunteer or donate for this year's Blue Santa drive, contact Danny Arredondo at 754-2270.

Enhancing Performance Evaluations & Merit Pay Program

(from page 1)

and employees regarding their performance. Human Resources plans to engage employees in February 2012 to gain feedback on how the current evaluation form will be changed.

Would you like to see just one evaluation form instead of multiple? Should we eliminate the number ranking system and move to a defined category ranking?

Joni Jones, Human Resources Manager, will lead the effort to engage employees in this process to revise the forms. The new forms will be used at the end of the year for 2012 performance feedback.

Additionally, Human Resources will implement a new merit program to reward **exempt employees** based on available budget dollars, performance and desired competencies as the Customer Service Plan suggests. Although merit increases will not be directly tied to the annual performance evaluation process, increases will be determined on a broader scope using this new program. We are catching up to the industry and moving quickly to a culture of accountability.

The new program consists of a new forced ranking system that rewards high performing employees with the maximum merit increase available, the average performing employee with an average merit increase, and the employees who are performing below expectations will not receive a merit increase. The idea is to reward top performing employees with merit pay, and assist low performing employees with a development plan.

So what's different? Exempt employees will get merit increases based on where they rank relative to their contributions to the organization in a forced ranking system. That means not every employee is a "10" or high performer.

Rained-Out Sights & Sounds of Christmas Still Draws Crowds



Aerial photo by Trey Hatt

By Trey Hatt and Heather Powdrill

Much-needed rain cut short the 25th Annual Sights & Sounds of Christmas, but not before patrons turned out in near-record numbers to enjoy the holiday festivities.

The popular annual holiday celebration drew an estimated 24,000 festival goers Wednesday and Thursday to the parks along the San Marcos River to enjoy live musical

performances, visits with Santa Claus, the Town of Bethlehem, arts and crafts booths, food booths, skating rink and carnival rides.

The festival kicked off on Tuesday, Nov. 29 2011 with the 10th Annual Gala. Gala Co-Chairs Heather Powdrill & Ann Frugoni organized the Boot Scootin' Boogie Gala that drew over 211 participants and raised nearly \$4,000 for Sights & Sounds. The gala was catered by Palmer's Restaurant Bar & Courtyard.

On Saturday, Dec. 3, Board President Brian Olson oversaw the Sights & Sounds 5K run, which raised about \$9,000. All funds raised by the Sights & Sounds Committee are put directly back into the parks and the continuation of the event.

Started in 1987, Sights & Sounds of Christmas has grown every year with more activities, vendors and participation. The dedicated City employees who join community volunteers help make this event possible every year. Thank you!

This program will be rolled out to **exempt employees only** payable in FY 2013 for performance in FY 2012. Non-exempt employees will continue with the similar method used in the past until the new program is refined for our organization.

I am teaming up with City Manager Jim Nuse to visit with employees and discuss compensation and the Customer Service Plan in January and February 2012. We held two brownbag lunch sessions in early January and will continue our visits with City departments.

Board Members

- Rodney Cobb - Past President
- Heather Powdrill - Vice President and Gala Co-Chair
- Ken Claybourn - Financial Director
- William Ford - Food Director
- Lisa Morris - Entertainment Director
- Oscar Hairell - Logistics Director

Committee Members and Other VIP Volunteers

- Sandy McKenzie - Food Committee
- Debbie Dietz
- Jimmy Venable and entire Park Crews - setup and maintenance
- Jessica Jenkins - Entertainment/Gala Committee
- Richard Merritt, Mick Medina, Lane Supak, lifeguards and Activity Center attendants - volunteered at the information booth
- Ken Bell, Jeff Caldwell, Police Department, Park Rangers - Security

Compensation Study Update

By Linda Spacek,
Assistant Director of Human Resources

Progress is continuing on the update of the City's Non-Civil Service Compensation Program. We have received preliminary information from the Segal Group, Compensation Consultant, including job survey results and recommended changes to our non-civil service pay plan.

Initial survey results indicate that the majority of our jobs are near market, with some below market and some above market. Additionally, the consultant has recommended moving to one single pay plan. Pay plans are made of a grouping of individual pay ranges. Each pay range begins with a market midpoint which is established through the compensation survey.

The proposed range is 20% above and 20% below the market midpoint. This is the same as our current pay plan for exempt employees. The range for non-exempt employees is currently 15% above and 15% below the market midpoint.

Once this information has been reviewed, we will begin working with the consultant to develop plans for placing employees within the new pay ranges. Factors such as position, performance and tenure may be considered. Our goal is to develop several implementation options for consideration.

Human Resources will keep employees updated on the progress of the study. "Brown bag lunch" meetings were held in early January to review various HR programs including Compensation. Additional meetings are planned for March to discuss updates to the Compensation Program in greater detail.

Any changes to compensation will be effective in April 2012 and will not be retroactive. It is important to note that not all employees will receive a pay increase, depending on the market position of the job and the employee's position in the pay range. In addition, implementing the April increases will depend on whether the City budget meets its projections. If you have questions, please contact me or Ron Campos, Director of Human Resources.



TRIAL RUN: City staff register their views on Level of Service to test the computer program modified for use in San Marcos by Denise Molina and IT.



SABAS AVILA is grilled by colleagues about transportation issues.



CITY MANAGER JIM NUSE explains the role of staff volunteers for eight Level of Service community meetings in January and February.



OSCAR HAIRELL explains Corolla, Camry and Lexus levels for Parks & Recreation.

EMPLOYEE GROUP REPORT

By Bobette Elliott and Julie Salas,
Employee Group Co-Chairs

Julie and I just want to let everyone know how honored we were to be co-chairs for this year. We have made stronger friendships and enjoyed every event because of the people we worked with side by side.

We had many events this year, with each of them being successful from all the hard work put forth from our departments representatives. We had a great group this year and everyone pitched in to make each event the best yet!

Our Employee's Children Christmas party was so much fun. Along with all the regular events, such as the games, food, fun, arts and crafts, the Jiggle Bug Express and Mr. and Mrs. Claus being present, this year we were able to have drawings and give away two bicycles.

From the compliments we continue to receive, it appears that the employee Christmas party was one of the best ever. The decorations were simple and elegant and were shared with the attendees at the end of the night. We had plenty of exciting door prizes, entertainment, music, food, and karaoke.

We are already making plans for the party next year!

Employee Department Recognition for Legal and Public Works and their divisions (which include Airport, Equipment Services, Streets and Drainage and Traffic) will be held Feb. 20 at 3 p.m. in the Activity Center. Please attend and let these departments know you appreciate all the work that they do. Refreshments will be served.

Forms to sign up to be an Employee Group representative will be sent to each department within the next few days. Please join us and become a volunteer.

We hope the next members that are appointed to the group and as co-chairs will enjoy it as much as we have. The time and work you put into it is a small sacrifice to what we all get out of it. Think about it! By being an Employee Group representative, you are helping us all.

Veteran Lineman Retires after 38 Years

By Kyle Dicke, Assistant Director of Public Services



READY FOR THE HUNT: B.J. is delighted with his gift from his friends at the Electric Utility.

After over 38 years of service, on December 27, 2011, Billy Joe Peterson stepped from the electric utility business and step into retirement.

B.J. began his career in public power in May of 1973, as a Line Crew Helper for the Lower Colorado River Authority's San Marcos district. He was quickly trained and promoted to the position of Apprentice Lineman and then eventually became a full Line Person. B.J. worked on various construction crews and has had a hand in building nearly every significant power line in San Marcos.

In 1991, when the City purchased the electric utility system from the LCRA, B.J. moved off of the line crew and became the "service truck" lineman. In this position, B.J. repaired countless street lights, tied in

and hooked up new electrical services and kept power lines free and clear of tree limbs. For over 20 years, B.J. has often been the face of the Electric Utility, working one-on-one with local electricians, developers and the citizens of San Marcos.

In his time in San Marcos, whether with the LCRA or with the City, B.J. has seen the electric system grow from less than 3,500 connected meters to over 22,000. Besides witnessing tremendous growth in the San Marcos system, B.J. has led the utility through floods, wind and ice storms as well as countless broken poles, transformer failures and downed power lines.

B.J. will certainly be missed by his co-workers, local contractors and the citizens of San Marcos. But the time has come for B.J. to move into the next stage of his life, where he plans to spend more time with Helen, his wife of over 35 years, his two daughters and three grandchildren. B.J. will also spend his retirement doing odd jobs, ranch work, finishing building his barn and hunting every chance he can.



SALUTE TO BJ: Mayor Daniel Guerrero honors longtime employee B.J. Peterson on his retirement in December. L-R front, are Kaden and Keira Johnson, second row, Mayor Guerrero, B.J. Peterson, Helen Peterson, Arieah Alvarez, Myla Alvarez, Brooke Johnson, back row Council Members Shane Scott and Wayne Becak and Kyle Dicke.

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

By Bobette Elliott,
Administrative Assistant, Legal Dept.

Assistant City Manager Laurie Moyer and her husband John are very happy to report that their son Daniel Moyer graduated from University of Texas San Antonio this month with his Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.

Sandra Bolonos, Accounting Specialist and husband Rolando proudly report that

their son Pvt. Mathew Bolanos, recently graduated from MCT (Military Combat Training) at Camp Pendleton on Dec. 13, 2011. His MOS (Military Occupation Specialty) is Engineer Equipment Mechanic at Ft. Leonardwood, Mo. Graduation is in March 2011 then off to his fleet. Mathew's parents are very proud of him for his commitment and courage.

Lauren Winek, an intern in the Engineering/CIP Department, is

graduating from the University of Texas/Austin with a degree in Civil Engineering.

Commander Penny Dunn, SMPD, graduated from the Certified Public Manager (CPM) Course at the William P. Hobby Center for Public Service at Texas State University – San Marcos during a ceremony at the State Capitol in Austin, Texas on Dec. 2, 2011. The CPM program is a nationally accredited comprehensive statewide management

development program specifically for managers in federal, state, and local government. The program's primary goal is to improve the performance of public sector managers and the organizational performance of state, local and federal government.

Library Clerk Caitlin Collier graduated from Texas State with a Bachelors degree in Wildlife Biology in December 2011, and she got married on New Year's Eve!

State of the City Program Shaping the San Marcos of Tomorrow

By Melissa Millicam,
Director of Communications

Mayor Daniel Guerrero and the City Council will hold their seventh annual "State of the City" address on Thursday, Jan. 26 at the City of San Marcos Conference Center/ Embassy Suites. The event starts with the Level of Service community gathering at 5:30 p.m., followed by the address at 7 p.m.

Musical entertainment will be provided by Belle Stuart and the Bowie Elementary School Ballet Folklorico.

This year's speech will feature Mayor Guerrero and all the City Council who will provide brief reviews of recent accomplishments and the outlook for the year ahead. The Council Members include

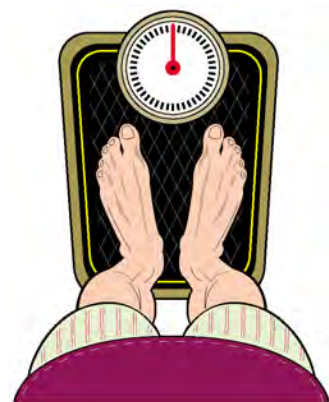
Mayor Guerrero, Kim Porterfield, Jude Prather, John Thomaides, Wayne Becak, Ryan Thomason and Shane Scott.

Their comments will focus on the City Council's five strategic initiatives: Strong Finances, Customer Friendly Processes, Big Picture Infrastructure, Maintaining & Protecting the San Marcos River, and Community Wellness/ Strengthening the Middle Class.

In addition, each Council Member will present a "Pioneer Spirit Award" to special recipients for their contributions to San Marcos.

The State of the City program was started in 2005 as an annual report to the community and interactive fair with City Departments. City employees are invited to attend.

New Session Coming for Weight Watchers at Work



By Tammy Strakos, Benefits Specialist

It's coming - another Weight Watchers at Work begins Feb. 8 for City of San Marcos employees, friends and family members!

Consider this:

- 2,454.30 pounds have been lost by COSM members since January 2010
- 88 total participants
- 22 lifetime members
- A ton of support and great friendships formed

Want to get in on the action and transform your life in 2012? Add your name to the interest list by contacting Tammy Strakos in Human Resources: tstrakos@sanmarcostx.gov.

TMRS HOSTS INFO SEMINAR ON RETIREMENT

By Melissa Mulhollan,
Benefits Manager

The Texas Municipal Retirement System will host an informational seminar geared toward employees who are nearing retirement eligibility or are already there. The seminar will be held Tuesday, Feb. 7 at the Schertz Civic Center, 1400 Schertz Parkway, Bldg. 5.

City employees approaching retirement eligibility or currently eligible to retire are encouraged to attend. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Tammy @ ext 8062 or Melissa @ ext 8064 no later than Jan. 31.

AGENDA

8:30-9 a.m.

Registration & Continental Breakfast

9-9:15 a.m. Welcome

9:15-10:30 a.m.

Stepping into Retirement (TMRS)

10:30-11:30 a.m. Social Security

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Estate Planning

